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ECUADOR.

Report from Guayaquil—Inspection and fumigation of vessels—Mortality—Plague, smallpox, and yellow fever.

Assistant Surgeon Wightman reports, June 5:

Week ended May 30. One steamship was fumigated and dispatched, with a personnel of 120 crew, 56 cabin and 34 steerage passengers.

During the same week 79 deaths occurred in Guayaquil, including plague 10, and smallpox 4. One case of yellow fever was reported during the week.

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

Report from Belfast—Conclusions of Commission relative to prevalence of enteric fever—Unsanitary shellfish as a cause of disease—Mortality from tuberculosis.

Consul Knabenshue reports, June 17:

There has been for a number of years an unexplained prevalence of enteric fever in Belfast, attended by serious mortality, notwithstanding an excellent water supply and the enforcement of many sanitary precautions. In fact, so persistent was the succession of cases that the disease might be said to be endemic rather than epidemic in form. The local government board for Ireland determined to make special inquiry as to its cause, and in February, 1907, appointed a commission for that purpose.

This commission was directed to investigate thoroughly not only the unexplained prevalence of enteric fever but also every matter bearing upon the public health of Belfast. This work engaged the members until recently, and the report of the commission has now been made public.

The commission found that the mortality from enteric fever during the past 25 years in Belfast had been so great that no other city or town of the United Kingdom had even approached it. During the years 1900, 1901, and 1902 the annual death rate from this disease was 0.72 per 1,000 of population in Belfast as compared with 0.34 in Dublin, 0.13 in Manchester, and 0.15 in England and Wales.

The continuous prevalence of this disease has been contemporaneous with improvements in the water supply and in the general sanitary condition of the city. The most manifest facts regarding it ascertained by the commission were that it affected the working classes rather than the wealthier population, and that the Jewish residents of the city were practically exempt. Dr. L. W. Darra Mair, medical inspector of the local government board for England, was asked by his fellow-members to devote himself to investigating the causes of the disease prevailing under these conditions. His conclusions were adopted by the commission as part of its report.

The commission completely absolved the local water supply. One limited outbreak was traced to infected milk; but the endemic prevalence of the disease was shown to be due to the unrestricted gathering of cockles, mussels, and other shellfish from the "slob-lands" of Belfast Lough, which are laden with the city's sewage. Hundreds of acres in area of these lands are exposed at every low tide, and the shellfish are gathered by the poorer classes of the community, being eaten chiefly raw. The exemption of the Jewish residents was due to their refusal to eat these molluscs. The evidence on which